



# McDowell Sonoran Preserve

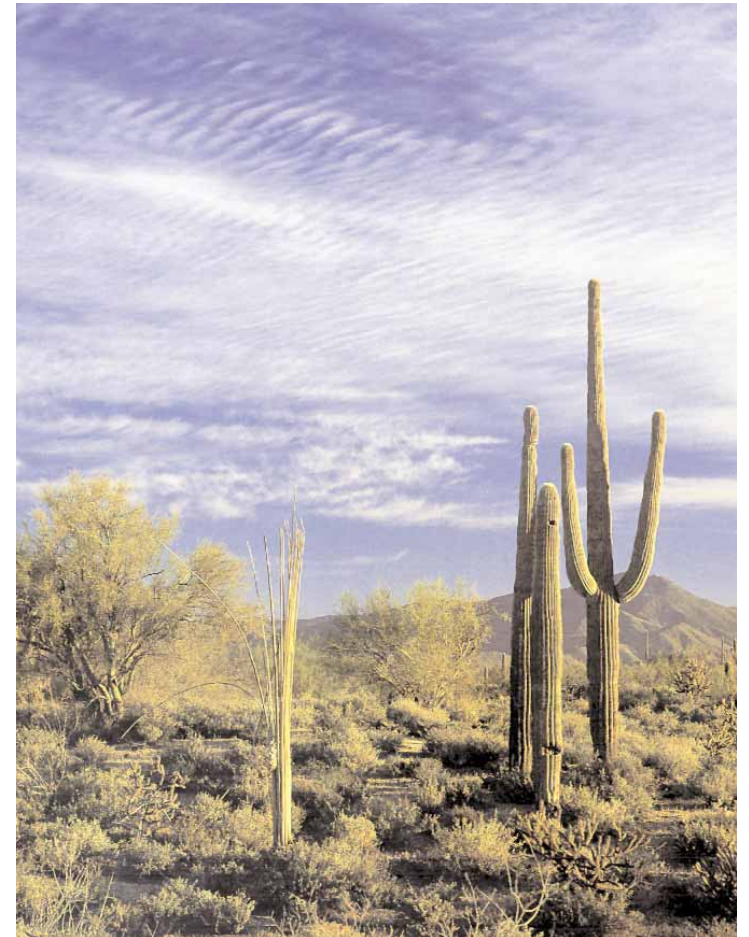
## ACCESS AREA DESIGN AND SITE STANDARDS

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*"Wilderness is not a luxury but a necessity of the human spirit."*

Edward Abbey





## Mission Statement

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*To develop environmentally responsible public access areas that borrow from and blend into the natural desert landforms and landscape of each specific Preserve access location.*

### City Council

Mary Manross, Mayor	Ned O'Hearn
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### McDowell Sonoran Preserve Commission

Darren Smith, Chairman	Virginia Korte
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Erik Filsinger	Don Ruff
Laura Fisher	Solange Whitehead
Christine Kovach	

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## Introduction

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### Background

In 1990, Scottsdale citizens, through the non-profit McDowell Sonoran Land Trust, initiated the vision for what ultimately will be the preservation of approximately 36,400 acres of Scottsdale's McDowell Mountains and Sonoran Desert. The McDowell Sonoran Preserve will consist of mountains, Sonoran Desert and natural corridors linking to natural open space in adjacent communities, the Tonto National Forest and the Maricopa County Regional Park. The goal is to preserve a large sustainable natural desert habitat for wildlife and desert flora with public access for appropriate passive recreational and educational use.

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When completed, the McDowell Sonoran Preserve will encompass approximately 1/3 of Scottsdale's total land area and will be one of the largest urban preserves in the country.

The McDowell Sonoran Preserve is intended to be preserved in as natural a state as possible. Limited amenities will be provided in strategically located access areas to accommodate appropriate

public use and enjoyment of the Preserve. The McDowell Sonoran Preserve Access Areas Report, identifies generalized locations for planned Community and Local Access areas as points of entry into the Preserve. Additional access locations may be identified in the future. Access areas range in size from Local Access, providing walkin opportunities; Minor Community Access, which will include amenities needed to accommodate and support entry into and use of the Preserve and parking for up to 100 vehicles and equestrian trailers; Major Community Access, which will include a potentially expanded list of amenities and parking for up to 300 vehicles and equestrian trailers. Access areas are intended to allow visitors to experience the McDowell Sonoran Preserve through hiking, horseback riding, mountain biking, nature studies, bird watching, scenic viewing, picnicking, rock climbing and more.

The Sunrise - Via Linda Access Area is a unique situation. This access area lies outside, but near the Preserve. It is divided into two separate sites. Land and improvement funds for this access area were provided as a stipulation of a zoning case. Every effort will be made to adhere to the recommendations contained in this manual when providing amenities in Sunrise - Via Linda; however, given the unique character and circumstances of this location, it may not be feasible to fully achieve all specific design and site standards.

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In addition, there is a planned Gateway to the McDowell Sonoran Preserve to be located in the general area north of Bell Road and east of the Thompson Peak Parkway alignment between Bell Road and Union Hills Drive. The Gateway will be the largest and most significant access area containing a broad range of amenities, possibly a Preserve maintenance facility and office, parking for up to 600 vehicles and potentially a Desert Discovery Center. While the intent is for the Gateway to adhere to the design principles established herein, it is anticipated that as design and construction planning for this particular area progresses, there will need to be flexibility to accommodate the unique functions of and to achieve the specific community objectives for this access area.

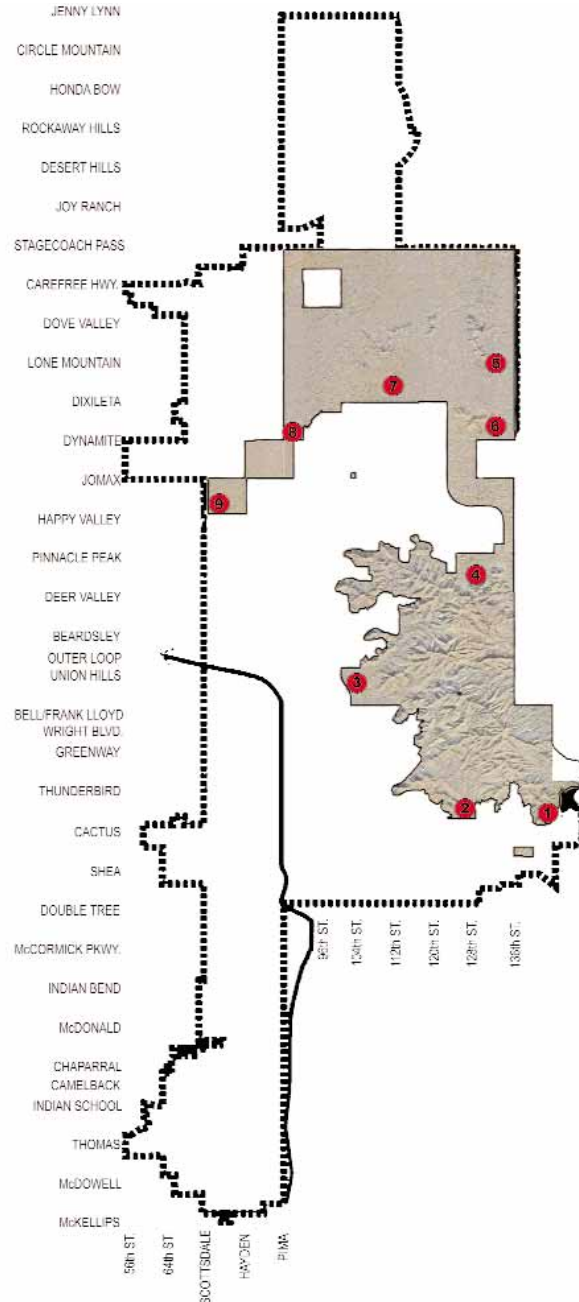
It is important that access areas be well planned to manage and control usage of the Preserve (quantity of people), and managed to prevent unsafe and unwanted trails, minimize disruption of neighborhoods, disturbance of archaeological sites and destruction of sensitive plants and wildlife habitats.

Please refer to Scottsdale Revised Code Chapter 21 for more information. Also see [www.scottsdale.gov/preserve](http://www.scottsdale.gov/preserve).





## McDowell Sonoran Preserve Access Areas



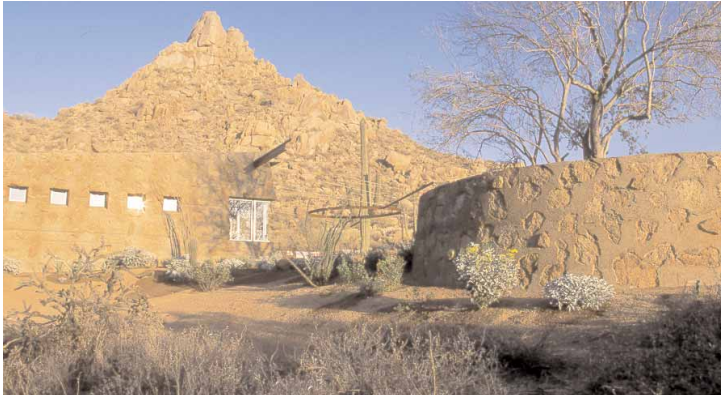
- 1 Sunrise - Via Linda Trailheads\*  
minor community access
- 2 Lost Dog Wash\*  
major community access
- 3 Preserve Gateway\*  
gateway access
- 4 North McDowell\*  
major community access
- 5 Little Granite Mountain\*  
major community access
- 6 Fraesfield Mountain\*  
minor community access
- 7 Alma School\*  
minor community access
- 8 Pima - Dynamite\*  
major community access
- 9 Happy Valley - Scottsdale Road\*  
minor community access

*\* Preserve access area names for reference only.  
Access areas will be named at a later date.*

# Design Principles

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Create environmentally responsive public accesses that borrow from and blend into the natural desert landforms and landscape of each specific Preserve site.



## Site Design

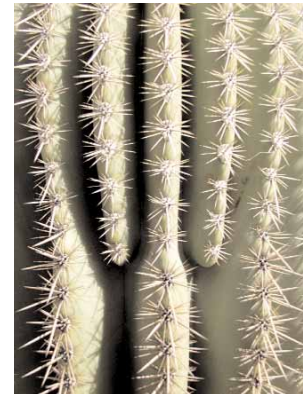
- Preserve the natural character
- Minimize disturbance
- Integrate amenities
- Restore disturbed areas to replicate the natural character
- Provide habitat and biodiversity
- Minimize the use of potable water
- Maximize water harvesting (i.e. rainfall runoff irrigation) techniques
- Encourage educational and interpretive opportunities

## Structures

- Encourage the use of native and/or naturally expressed materials
- Minimize environmental and, to the maximum extent feasible, negative visual impacts from other locations in the Preserve, from locations outside of the Preserve, and from within the access area site, through the design of architectural elements that respond to the Sonoran Desert and to the specific characteristics of the site
- Design structures that borrow from and blend into the natural desert landforms and landscape of the specific Preserve sites
- When possible, use existing materials from the portion of the site that is to contain amenities
- Promote environmental processes (solar, etc.)

## Construction

- Develop construction processes to mitigate activities that could potentially damage the site
- Promote environmentally responsible and green building construction practices
- Promote the use and re-use of available on-site materials



# Approval Process Summary

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Access areas in the McDowell Sonoran Preserve will serve to communicate to the public how the natural environment can be protected while at the same time accommodating public access and appropriate use. As such, it is critically important that the process to establish amenities in the access areas demonstrates environmentally responsible design and construction practices during all phases of the project. In order to ensure that the highest standards are adhered to, the design and construction process shall follow more rigorous standards than for typical projects outside of the Preserve.

The following outline of the Approval Process is intended to work in conjunction with the City of Scottsdale's Development Services Submittal and Approval requirements, including the Development Review Board process. In addition, the standards set forth herein are intended to be supplemental to other ordinances and regulations that may also apply, including, but not limited to, the Environmentally Sensitive Lands Ordinance, Native Plant Ordinance, Archaeology Ordinance, Federal 404 permitting requirements, Building Safety requirements and other submittals that may be required to receive construction permits.

## Submittal and Approval Process

- Step 1: Archaeology Assessment
- Step 2: Site Analysis Submittal / McDowell Sonoran Preserve Commission review and staff approval
- Step 3: Preliminary Design Submittal / McDowell Sonoran Preserve Commission review and staff approval
- Step 4: Development Review Board Submittal / McDowell Sonoran Preserve Commission review, staff review and DRB approval
- Step 5: Construction Documentation / Staff review and Development Services approval
- Step 6: Construction Envelope Fencing Plan / Staff approval
- Step 7: Native Plant Salvage Permit / Staff approval and Development Services permit
- Step 8: Site Salvage Inspection / Staff approval
- Step 9: Site Inspection Prior to Project Closeout / Staff approval

*See Section IV, "Design Approval and Inspection Process", for submittal requirements.*

